

SENATE RESOLUTION 416—EX-PRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF SEPTEMBER 2025 AS “SICKLE CELL DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH” IN ORDER TO EDUCATE COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE UNITED STATES ABOUT SICKLE CELL DISEASE AND THE NEED FOR RESEARCH, EARLY DETECTION METHODS, EFFECTIVE TREATMENTS, AND PREVENTATIVE CARE PROGRAMS WITH RESPECT TO COMPLICATIONS FROM SICKLE CELL DISEASE AND CONDITIONS RELATED TO SICKLE CELL DISEASE

Mr. THUNE (for Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. PADILLA, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Ms. WARREN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. WARNOCK)) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 416

Whereas sickle cell disease (referred to in this preamble as “SCD”) is an inherited blood disorder that is a major health problem in the United States and worldwide;

Whereas SCD can result in multiple medical complications, including anemia, jaundice, gallstones, strokes, restricted blood flow, damaged tissue in the liver, spleen, and kidneys, and death;

Whereas SCD causes acute and chronic episodes of severe pain;

Whereas SCD affects an estimated 100,000 individuals in the United States;

Whereas approximately 2,000 babies are born with SCD each year in the United States, with the disease occurring in approximately 1 in 365 newborn Black or African American infants and 1 in 16,300 newborn Hispanic-American infants, and can be found in individuals of Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, Asian, and Indian origin;

Whereas more than 2,000,000 individuals in the United States have the sickle cell trait and 1 in 13 Black or African Americans carries the trait;

Whereas there is a 1 in 4 chance that a child born to parents who both have the sickle cell trait will have the disease;

Whereas the life expectancy of an individual with SCD in the United States is often severely limited, with some estimates showing a shortened life expectancy by 20 years;

Whereas sickle cell anemia is a common cause of childhood stroke, and in 2019, fewer than half of children with sickle cell anemia who were 2 to 16 years old received the recommended screening for stroke;

Whereas, in 2019, only 2 in 5 children with sickle cell anemia who were 2 to 9 years old used recommended medication that can prevent sickle cell anemia complications;

Whereas, in 2020, the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine developed a comprehensive strategic plan and blueprint for action to address sickle cell disease, which, among other things, cited the need for new innovative therapies and promoting widespread patient access to approved treatments;

Whereas, in 2023, hematopoietic stem cell transplantation (commonly known as “HSCT”) was the only cure for SCD, and the Food and Drug Administration has since approved 2 gene therapies that have been demonstrated to cure SCD;

Whereas more research is needed to find more treatments and cures to help individuals with SCD;

Whereas the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has introduced an innovative cell and gene therapy access model for interested States and United States territories, where it will support administration and outcomes-based contracts with drug manufacturers for Medicaid beneficiaries to receive these life-saving breakthroughs; and

Whereas September 2025 has been designated as “Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month” in order to educate communities across the United States about SCD, including early detection methods, effective treatments, and preventative care programs with respect to complications from SCD and conditions related to SCD; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to hold appropriate programs, events, and activities during Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month to raise public awareness of the sickle cell trait, preventative care programs, treatments, and other patient services for those suffering from sickle cell disease, complications from sickle cell disease, and conditions related to sickle cell disease.

SENATE RESOLUTION 417—SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 14 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 20, 2025, AS “TELEHEALTH AWARENESS WEEK”

Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. WICKER, Mr. WARNER, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 417

Whereas telehealth allows a health care practitioner to furnish health care services to a patient or a practitioner at a different physical location than the health care practitioner;

Whereas telehealth plays a significant role in supporting access to quality health care services for millions of patients;

Whereas health care workforce shortages are a significant problem in many areas and for many types of health care clinicians;

Whereas telehealth increases access to health care in areas with workforce shortages and for individuals who live far away from health care facilities, have limited mobility or access to transportation, or have other barriers to accessing care;

Whereas, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the utilization of telehealth services in the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.) was low, accounting for approximately 0.1 percent of visits of patients receiving health care services under Medicare part B in 2019;

Whereas 25 percent of Medicare beneficiaries received at least 1 telehealth service in 2024;

Whereas, in 2023, approximately 90 percent of Medicare beneficiaries who received a telehealth service were satisfied with their experience;

Whereas, in 2024, telehealth was a routine health care modality with 13 percent of all Medicare beneficiaries and 23 percent of dually eligible Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries using telehealth in the last quarter of the calendar year;

Whereas telehealth is a common care modality for Medicare beneficiaries to receive behavioral health services, with half of common psychotherapy services furnished under the original Medicare fee-for-service program delivered by telehealth in 2022;

Whereas federally qualified health centers and rural health clinics use telehealth to deliver services to rural and underserved populations;

Whereas telehealth now represents a critical component of health care delivery;

Whereas any lapse in Medicare coverage for telehealth services could adversely impact patient access to care;

Whereas legislative efforts to increase telehealth access have received bipartisan support in the Senate and the House of Representatives;

Whereas the United States has an opportunity to help improve access to health services for all individuals, including members of rural and underserved communities; and

Whereas “Telehealth Awareness Week” unites the efforts of patients, caregivers, health care providers, policymakers, and other stakeholders to advance the role of telehealth in health care: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of September 14 through September 20, 2025, as “Telehealth Awareness Week”;

(2) recognizes the impact of telehealth in delivering health care services for patients across the United States; and

(3) urges that steps should be taken to—

(A) raise awareness about the benefits of telehealth;

(B) highlight resources for health care providers and patients regarding telehealth;

(C) collect and analyze data on the impacts of telehealth; and

(D) promote continuous access to telehealth for all communities and across settings.

SENATE RESOLUTION 418—EX-PRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 20 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 27, 2025, AS “NATIONAL ESTUARIES WEEK”

Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. CASSIDY, Ms. ALSOBROOKS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COONS, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KIM, Mr. KING, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. REED, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHIFF, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works:

S. RES. 418

Whereas estuary regions cover only 13 percent of the land area in the continental United States but contain nearly 40 percent of the population, 39 percent of the jobs, and 47 percent of the economic output of the United States;

Whereas the oceans, estuaries, and Great Lakes of the United States continue to fuel economic growth across the United States, with employment from the estuarine and ocean economy growing at 4.5 percent in 2023, compared to the national average employment growth of 2 percent;

Whereas the estuary, ocean, and Great Lakes economic sectors created 111,000 new jobs between 2022 and 2023, employed 2,600,000 people, and contributed \$511,000,000,000 to the 2023 gross domestic product;

Whereas the commercial and recreational fishing industries support over 2,300,000 jobs in the United States;

Whereas, in 2022—

(1) commercial and recreational saltwater fishing in the United States generated \$321,000,000,000 in sales;

(2) angler trip expenditures totaled nearly \$13,412,000,000; and

(3) saltwater recreational fishing supported at least 691,693 jobs, generated \$138,000,000,000 in sales impacts across the economy of the United States, and contributed \$45,100,000,000 in income impacts and \$74,900,000,000 in value-added impacts to the United States;

Whereas estuaries provide vital habitats, nurseries, and migration stopovers for—

(1) countless species of fish and wildlife, including more than 68 percent of the commercial fish catch in the United States by value and 80 percent of the recreational fish catch in the United States by weight; and

(2) many species that are listed as threatened or endangered, including birds integral to the health of estuaries, such as the Snowy Plover and Saltmarsh Sparrow;

Whereas estuaries provide critical ecosystem services that protect human health and public safety, including water filtration, flood control, shoreline stabilization, erosion prevention, and the protection of coastal communities during hurricanes, storms, and other extreme weather events;

Whereas, restored wetlands in the United States have been shown to remove up to 80 percent of nitrogen and 70 percent of phosphorus from runoff water;

Whereas, in 2017, mangrove ecosystems in Florida prevented \$1,500,000,000 in direct flood damage during Hurricane Maria;

Whereas, coastal wetlands from Maine to North Carolina prevented \$625,000,000 in property damage during Hurricane Sandy;

Whereas, in New Jersey, areas with salt marshes experience 16 percent lower annual flood losses than areas without salt marshes;

Whereas, by the 1980s, the United States had already lost more than 50 percent of the wetlands that existed in the Thirteen Original Colonies;

Whereas the degradation and loss of estuaries has led to the collapse of some bays in the United States that were once filled with fish and oysters and have now become dead zones filled with excess nutrients, chemical waste, and marine debris;

Whereas harmful algal blooms are hurting fish, wildlife, and human health and are causing serious ecological and economic harm to many estuaries;

Whereas changes in sea level can affect estuarine water quality and estuarine habitats;

Whereas section 320 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1330) (commonly known as the “Clean Water Act”) authorizes the development of comprehensive conservation and management plans to ensure that the designated uses of estuaries are protected and to restore and maintain—

(1) chemical, physical, and biological integrity;

(2) water quality;

(3) the balanced indigenous population of shellfish, fish, and wildlife; and

(4) recreational activity;

Whereas the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1451 et seq.) provides that the policy of the United States is to preserve, protect, develop, and, if possible, restore or enhance the resources of the coastal zones of the United States, including estuaries, for current and future generations;

Whereas 34 coastal and Great Lakes States and territories of the United States operate or contain a National Estuary Program or a National Estuarine Research Reserve;

Whereas scientific study leads to a better understanding of the benefits of estuaries to human and ecological communities;

Whereas the Federal Government, State, local, and Tribal governments, national and community organizations, and individuals work together to effectively manage the estuaries of the United States;

Whereas coastal and marine habitat restoration efforts restore natural infrastructure in local communities in a cost-effective manner, generating an average of 17 jobs for every \$1,000,000 invested and helping to reestablish the natural functions of estuaries that yield countless benefits; and

Whereas the week of September 20 through September 27, 2025, is recognized as “National Estuaries Week” to increase awareness among all people of the United States, including Federal Government and State, local, and Tribal government officials, of the importance of healthy estuaries and the need to protect and restore estuaries: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses support for the designation of “National Estuaries Week”;

(2) supports the goals and ideals of National Estuaries Week;

(3) acknowledges the importance of estuaries to sustaining employment in the United States and to the economic well-being and prosperity of the United States;

(4) recognizes that persistent threats undermine the health of estuaries;

(5) applauds the work of national and community organizations and public partners that promote public awareness, understanding, protection, and restoration of estuaries;

(6) supports the scientific study, preservation, protection, and restoration of estuaries; and

(7) expresses the intent of the Senate to continue working to understand, protect, and restore the estuaries of the United States.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3909. Mr. BOOKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3748 proposed by Mr. WICKER (for himself and Mr. REED) to the bill S. 2296, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2026 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3910. Mr. BOOKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3748 proposed by Mr. WICKER (for himself and Mr. REED) to the bill S. 2296, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3911. Mr. BOOKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3748 proposed by Mr. WICKER (for himself and Mr. REED) to the bill S. 2296, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3912. Mr. THUNE (for Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. PETERS, and Mr. WYDEN)) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 269, to improve coordination between Federal and State agencies and the Do Not Pay working system.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3909. Mr. BOOKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3748 proposed by Mr. WICKER (for himself and Mr. REED) to

the bill S. 2296, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2026 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title X, insert the following:

SEC. 10 . **ADDITIONAL ENTITLEMENT TO POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR CERTAIN VETERANS AND MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO REQUIRE EXTRA TIME TO COMPLETE REMEDIAL COURSES.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 3320A. Additional assistance

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The number of months of educational assistance under section 3313 of this title an eligible individual is entitled to under section 3312 of this title is hereby increased by the lesser of—

“(1) 15 months; or

“(2) in the case of an eligible individual who attempted or completed remedial and deficiency courses as described in subsection (b)(4), the full-time equivalent number of months of educational assistance used under this chapter to complete such remedial and deficiency courses.

“(b) ELIGIBILITY.—For purposes of this section, an eligible individual is an individual—

“(1) who is or was entitled to educational assistance under section 3311 of this title;

“(2) has received educational assistance under this chapter at any time during the most recent six month period;

“(3) who has used all of the educational assistance to which the individual is entitled under this chapter; and

“(4) who has attempted or completed remedial and deficiency courses in pursuit of completing a program of education at an institution of higher learning and in doing so requires more than the standard 120 semester (or 180 quarter) credit hours for completion of a program of education at an institution of higher learning.

“(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) The term ‘institution of higher learning’ has the meaning given such term in section 3452 of this title.

“(2) The term ‘remedial and deficiency course’ means a course offered by an institution of higher learning that is designed to overcome a deficiency.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 3320 the following new item:

“3320A. Additional assistance.”.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 3695 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(d) In the case of an individual who receives additional educational assistance under section 3320A of this title, the number of months specified in subsection (a) shall instead be construed to specify the number of months that is equal to the sum of—

“(1) such number of months; and

“(2) the amount of the increase in number of months of educational assistance to which the individual is entitled pursuant to section 3320A(a) of such title.”.

SEC. 10 . **INCREASED FLEXIBILITY IN TRANSFERRING ENTITLEMENT TO POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.**

Section 3319 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—